

ANAS MERIANÆ.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Rostrum lamelloso-dentatum, convexum, obtusum.

Lingua ciliata, obtusa.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 194.

Ord. *Anseres*.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS.

ANAS cupreo-ferrugineo cyaneo viridique varia, subtus alba, capite collo postico remigumque secundariorum apicibus caruncularis.

Ab exemplari, quod cum aliis multis Surinamensibus a lectissima MERIAN eximie depictis, in Museo Britannico asservatur, pulcherrimam hanc avem imitati sumus.

Omnes quibus illam intueri datum est semper torsit species incognita. Ad LINNÆI Anatis moschatæ similitudinem, seu, ut vulgo dicitur Moscoviticæ videtur accedere; caput tamen pluribus tuberculis aspergitur, per collum etiam posticum longe decurrentibus; quodque magis mirandum, in apicibus remigum secundariorum magna horum exuberat luxuria, fasciam duplicem caruncularum per mediam alam transverse ducentium.

ducentium. Effecit res nova et inaudita ut ipsius picturæ veritas in dubium vocetur, cum in reliquo hoc genere frustra quæratum simile quidpiam, nec sane in alio aliquo tanta sit tuberculorum ubertas.

Fatendum est Garruli Boiohemici, qui Ampelis Garrulus LINNÆI, remiges secundarios appendicibus complanatis corneis ruberrimisque terminari; quod et in Gallo gallinaceo, si juxta naturam ipsam vixerit, minus tamen perspicue, cernitur; in extremitatibus nempe pennarum quæ in collo sunt. Annon igitur in hac anatis specie remigibus secundariis revera appendantur tubercula; seu habeat avis certis temporibus carunculas laterales, quæ per ipsas alarum pennas interdum protrudantur; an denique ipsa MERIAN, ut physicorum ingenium exerceret, avemque formosiorum redderet, a veritate semel sciens volensque deflexerit; hæc omnia futuris indagatoribus relinquamus necesse est. Certum interim est hodiernis physicis plane ignotam esse hanc avem, illamque ex antiquioribus neminem aut descripsisse aut depinxisse. Magnitudinem Anatis communis seu Boschadis a MERIANA depingitur.





THE
MERIAN DUCK.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Bill broad and flattened ; the edges marked with sharp lamellæ.

Tongue broad and ciliated at the edges.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

DUCK varied with copper-ferruginous, deep blue, and green : white beneath ; with the head, back of neck, and tips of secondary wing-feathers carunculated.

The very extraordinary and beautiful bird here figured is accurately copied from a most elegant drawing by the celebrated Madam MERIAN, and is one of the birds of Surinam which occur in the representations by that lady now preserved in the British Museum.

This bird has uniformly puzzled every ornithologist who has viewed it, to determine its real species. It is evident at first sight that it bears a strong affinity to the *Anas moschata* of LINNÆUS, which is commonly called the Moscovy Duck ; but is much more tuberculated about the head, and even a very considerable distance down the back of the neck ; and what is to the last degree singular, the same sort of tubercles appear

pear in full luxuriance at the tips of the secondary remiges or wing feathers, forming a double carunculated band across the middle of the wing. This is a circumstance so extremely peculiar, that it has given rise to strong suspicions of the fidelity of the drawing; there being no other instance of a similar appearance in the birds of this genus, or indeed, in so striking a degree, in any other.

It is true that in the bird called the *Ampelis Garrulus*, or Bohemian Chatterer, the tips of the secondary wing-feathers are terminated by flat callous or horny appendages of a bright red color; and an appearance in some degree analogous to this takes place also in the tips of the neck-feathers of the common cock in a state of Nature. Whether therefore in this species of duck the tips of the secondaries be really furnished with tuberculated appendages; or whether the bird, at particular seasons may not be furnished with lateral caruncles, which may occasionally protrude between the feathers of the wings as represented by Madam MERIAN; or lastly, whether that ingenious lady may not in this instance have departed a little from her general accuracy, and have given what she might have considered as an additional ornament, must be left to future enquiries to determine: certain it is that the bird is unknown to modern ornithologists, and is neither figured or described by any other natural historian. The size of Madam MERIAN'S figure is nearly that of a common duck.